



**PAROLEE SERVICES NETWORK
REGIONAL MEETING
Kern County Mental Health
3300 Truxtun Avenue
Bakersfield
July 9, 2008**

PRESENT:

Bill Brooks – College Community Services
Oscar Acosta – WestCare
Elvira Diaz – ADP
Lily Alvarez – Mental Health

Ramona Elizondo – Mental Health
Rashid Frye – WestCare
Rodney Armstrong – CDCR
Cindy Coe – Mental Health

SUMMARY MINUTES:

1. **Introductions:** Accomplished.
2. **Approval of April 9, 2008 meeting minutes:** Motions to approve minutes by Elizondo / Frye; approved all ayes.
 - Bulleted items denote continued discussion that took place after Mr. Armstrong's arrival.
3. **Follow-up items:**
 - A. Page 2, Item 3 A: *Ms. Alvarez asked that College Community Services do historical research on how many PSN clients they had who are dual diagnosed; Ms. Diaz questioned whether a census could be done on how many PSN clients are dual diagnosed.* Ms. Alvarez indicated that the information could most likely be obtained through the ASI and CalOMS to determine prevalence, and would follow up through those sources, although the information may not be able to be specific to PSN.
 - B. Page 2, Item 3 B: *To clarify the issue of whether ADP would support a zero tolerance for alcohol, including any environment where alcohol is the primary business, the group agreed that it would take legislative action at the state level to change develop a zero tolerance for alcohol for parolees.* Mr. Frye had reported that WestCare has a standing policy for residential and outpatient clients that their expectation is that the client is not using alcohol, as a goal for the client.



Ms. Alvarez added that legally, if a client wanted to argue the point, they could use alcohol. The issue was discussed at the ADP conference at the PSN Forum.

- C. Page 3, Item 3 C: *Under-utilization of College Community Services slots in Lake Isabella and Ridgecrest.* Ms. Alvarez reported that the weekly census indicates under-utilization continues to be a problem. Mr. Brooks indicated that they do not know how many parolees reside in these geographic areas; there has been a change in the parole agent assigned to the area and perhaps the impetus for referrals was not clearly communicated. Ms. Diaz agreed that the issue should be pressed through Parole; at the ADP conference John Bailey expressed support for local district administrators to be engaged in PSN. Ms. Diaz also agreed to research the figures for the parole populations in Kern County.

Mr. Brooks suggested that perhaps a face-to-face meeting with the new parole agent to describe services and meet staff would be beneficial. Ms. Diaz offered to also attend and to find out who the agents are assigned to the area. Ms. Diaz perceives transportation costs are becoming an issue for everyone, and public transportation in rural areas may become a problem. Mr. Brooks responded that some of the communities have public transportation, and others are in a compacted area. Ms. Alvarez will send Rodney Armstrong an e-mail to let him know of the offered meeting.

Ms. Alvarez indicated that capacity at WestCare had been reconfigured to add two more residential beds. Mr. Frye reported WestCare had three Level 2, twenty-five Level 3, and six Level 4 slots.

- Ms. Alvarez questioned whether Mr. Armstrong felt a face-to-face meeting with the east area parole agents would be beneficial. Mr. Armstrong responded he thought the under-utilization issue had been resolved; Ms. Alvarez responded that the situation continues. After discussion, it was determined that the weekly census would also be sent to Mr. Armstrong. Mr. Brooks offered to meet with the parole agent supervisor instead of the two individual agents, but would still like to at least meet the agents.
- Ms. Diaz questioned whether CDCR knows how many parolees have been discharged to Kern County. Mr. Armstrong responded that he could probably find the information, but it would be broken down by county and not city.

- D. Page 4, Item 6 A: *Parole reported a time gap between referral and treatment placement.* Ms. Alvarez felt that the reference was focused on Prop 36 cases, as there are no waiting lists for PSN clients.

- Ms. Alvarez reported that Prop 36 is at capacity, but the PSN program does not have capacity issues.

E. Page 5, Item 8 C: *Status of the FY 2008-09 PSN Work Plan*. Ms. Alvarez reported that the Work Plan is not yet completed. Ms. Diaz reported that Kern County is not the only county that has not submitted their Work Plan. Ms. Alvarez briefly reported on the budget cuts that have already been taken locally and anticipated cuts.

4. State ADP Issues:

A. Ms. Diaz reported on the recent ADP conference and thanked those from Kern County who attended the PSN Forum. The PSN Forum was considered a success. It is hoped that issues that were raised will continue to be discussed at the regional level. To that end, Ms. Diaz questioned whether Kern County would be interested in participating in a four-hour session with other region counties; members agreed. Kern, Sacramento and Fresno counties would be invited to attend, with providers and county, and Parole representatives, along with ADP and DARS representatives. A goal of the gathering would be to facilitate business operations as a network. Mr. Frye felt issues like addressing co-occurring disorder treatment and treatment strategies would also be beneficial. Ms. Diaz responded that meeting with other counties and state agency representatives may help to identify resolutions focused on budget issues and treatment.

- Mr. Armstrong also felt that an extended regional meeting would be beneficial. Ms. Diaz offered that perhaps WestCare could assist by use of their teleconferencing equipment.

Ms. Alvarez expressed that the report at the ADP conference was, regardless of the inconsistency of the data, the PSN program is the best at DARS. This was a surprise and felt ADP should have told counties. Kern County has never received data from ADP on the PSN program, despite having submitted data over the past eight years. It was exhibited at the conference that PSN counties are using different models and have different philosophies. Working with parolees, especially those with multiple institutionalizations or high risk, requires strengthening counselor skill sets.

Ms. Diaz responded that DARS report that the PSN treatment model is the best they have, but ADP does not know on what basis the statement was made because they do not have access to the data. Should DARS be asked to bring data specific to the PSN program to the planned gathering; members responded in agreement. Mr. Brooks questioned whether there were other rural providers that could be invited to the gathering; Ms. Diaz responded that the three counties in the central region utilize about 23 PSN treatment providers between them. There are issues

unique to each county, and perhaps a formal evaluation of the PSN model has never been done due to the fragmented treatment model. Each county is given the opportunity to develop its own “network” model, and as a result there are very distinct approaches in each region; coupled with the lack of data to support the program it is difficult to make a case for additional funding.

Ms. Alvarez responded that, minimally, DARS should be able to provide data on ethnicity, sex, length of stay, treatment levels, and successful discharges. To not have at least this minimum is frustrating.

5. State CDCR Issues:

- A. Not present.

6. Kern County Parole Issues:

- A. Mr. Armstrong reported that there has been a problem with the Mental Health Department placement of mentally ill parolees. It was thought that the issue had been resolved, but the county contracts restrict use of facilities that also house parolees, which effects about 90% of these facilities. Are there any facilities available on the substance abuse side that would house parolees with mental health and substance abuse issues. Ms. Alvarez provided an overview of the separation of the divisions of mental health and substance abuse services. There is no capacity on the substance abuse side due to limited capacity as a result of budget shortfalls, although there is nothing to preclude treatment of a co-occurring disorder parolee. Ms. Alvarez questioned whether Parole had considered the use of sober living environments; Mr. Armstrong responded that most will not accept parolees who are mentally ill and need medication. Members discussed barriers in providing these services.
- B. Members congratulated Mr. Armstrong on his appointment to the district administrator position.

7. Provider Issues:

- A. College Community Services: No additional issues reported.
- B. WestCare: Mr. Frye initiated discussion on the statistics that were provided at the last meeting, specifically no-shows and unsuccessful discharges. Ms. Alvarez offered that perhaps research needs to be done on new models. Ms. Diaz added that employment issues need to be addressed, and perhaps Chamber of Commerce members need to be invited to the planned gathering.

Ms. Alvarez felt that as long as ADP will only pay for a medical model, providers are “chained” to the clinic because nothing outside the clinic is reimbursed. Part of discussion should focus on different models. Ms. Alvarez provided a comparison of medical versus chronic care model and a recovery maintenance program. Ms. Diaz responded that there is no one funding source that will cover all aspects, which forces providers to seek other funding streams for ancillary services.

C. Mental Health Gate Team: No issues reported.

8. Mental Health Issues:

A. No additional issues reported.

9. Next meeting **October 8, 2008**, at Kern County Mental Health Administration.

LA:cc

Attachments to original minutes:
None